


FW 2025-26

AP/EN 2231 6.0A (Y)	Introduction to African American Literature
Course Director:	<p>Tiana Reid tareid@yorku.ca e-mail: tareid@yorku.ca</p> <p>Office hours begin in September. They are every Tuesday and Thursday from 1pm to 2pm. Please email for office location or check the syllabus. I also offer virtual office hours, by appointment only.</p>
Time:	Thursdays, 2:30 – 5:20pm
Delivery Format:	 SEMINAR
Description:	<p>This seminar is a survey of African American literature, from the 18th century to the 21st century. Introductions to African American literature and history are sometimes framed—implicitly or explicitly—as extending “from” slavery “to” freedom. We will consider literary, intellectual and political accounts of this progressive development. What are the prevailing understandings of and assumptions around slavery and freedom? How are they expressed in literature? In other words, this introduction to African American literature is also concerned with critical, theoretical, and conceptual questions.</p> <p>This course will stress the various multiplicities, geographies, and styles that make up African American literature across poetry, prose, drama, autobiography, fiction, non-fiction, and criticism. The first semester operates broadly historically and chronologically. The second semester will be more concerned with highlighting contemporary trends, theory, and discussions. While the focus of this course is on the United States, we will often grapple with questions of diaspora, internationalism, and global capitalism. In addition to paying attention to the formal elements of literature (such as narrative, imagery, sound, rhythm, tone, figure, metaphor, etc.), other key ideas and topics include: feminism, gender, sexuality, queerness, difference, reproduction, labor, power, violence, politics, the afterlife of slavery, the vernacular, incarceration, and visibility.</p>
Category:	C
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	<p>Meeting with instructor: 10%</p> <p>Reading response questions: 20%</p> <p>Synthesis essay: 25%</p> <p>Participation: 20%</p>

	Final assignment including short presentation: 25%
Reading List:	<p>- <i>Sula</i>, Toni Morrison</p> <p>We will also be reading a number of other excerpts, articles, poems, and shorter texts, all written by black authors. Many are also included in <i>The Norton Anthology of African American Literature</i>. Additional readings and audio/visual materials will be posted online.</p>
Open To:	YR 2, 3